GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3837
ANSWERED ON:16.05.2006
VISIT OF WTO DIRECTOR GENERAL TO INDIA
Athithan Shri Dhanuskodi;Chandrappan Shri C.K.;Mohite Shri Subodh;Singh Shri Sugrib

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Director General of WTO has recently visited India to bring consensus on various issues raised during WTO Conference especially at Doha Round Programme;

(b) if so, the details of issues discussed and the outcome thereof;

(c) the stand of the Government on the issues raised by him;

(d) the impact of WTO decision on Indian economy; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to save the Indian farmers?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (d): During his visit to New Delhi from 5-7 April 2006, Mr Pascal Lamy, Director General, World Trade Organisation (WTO), held ministerial level consultations with the Minister of Commerce and Industry and Finance Minister. During these consultations, the main issue that came up was on ways and means to meet the approaching deadline of 30th April 2006 for finalizing the modalities on negotiations on Agriculture and Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) as decided by the Ministers at the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Hong Kong, China, from 13-18 December 2005. Besides this, he also held discussions on the other issues covered by the WTO Doha Work Programme. During these discussions, the Government reiterated its concerns and interests in the on going negotiations under the Doha Work Progamme and on the need to deliver pro development outcomes applicable to all WTO Members, which meet the aspirations of the diverse group of countries, especially the developing countries. Since, these consultations were informal in nature, no decision was required to be taken. Further, the WTO Members could not finalise the modalities on negotiations on Agriculture and NAMA by the deadline of 30 April 2006 as mentioned above. Members have continued negotiations in Geneva since then with a view to achieving appropriate outcome.

(e): In the negotiations on Agriculture under the Doha Work Programme, India has engaged itself effectively to ensure that its core concerns and interests continue to be adequately addressed. As required by the exigencies of these negotiations, India has been submitting proposals in the various negotiating bodies of the WTO with a view to pursuing its national interests and to protect the interests of various stakeholders including the farmers. Further, India has been pro active in articulating its position on issues of concern to it, and other developing countries through coalition building, such as the G-20 on Agriculture and G-33 on Special Products and Special Safeguard Mechanism. On the domestic front, the Government is continuously monitoring the surge in import of sensitive items into the country. The Government is committed to intervene in a WTO compatible manner to protect the interests of all domestic stakeholders, especially the farmers.